

Solid Waste Interjurisdictional Technical Staff Work Group (ITSG)

Approved January 03, 2008
King Street Center

Meeting Attendees:

City Staff:

Kathleen Edman – City of Auburn
Sharon Hlavka – City of Auburn
Tom Spille – City of Bellevue
Rob Van Orsow – City of Federal Way
Stacey Breskin-Auer – City of Redmond

County Staff:

Jennifer Broadus, SWD
Jeff Gaisford, SWD
Jane Gateley, SWD
Josh Marx, SWD
Bill Reed, SWD
Thea Severn, SWD

I. Review Agenda and Minutes

Everyone present introduced themselves.

ITSG member Rob Van Orsow volunteered to give the ITSG update at the January Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Advisory Committee (MSWMAC) meeting.

The draft November meeting notes were approved with no changes.

II. SWD Updates

Interim Lead Planner Thea Severn reported that tentatively on February 13th there will be a grand opening event for the new Shoreline Recycling and Transfer Station. Invitations will be sent to all committee members. This event will provide an opportunity to tour the facility before operations start. Recycling and Environmental Services Manager Jeff Gaisford said that the tour will include the green building features and fee recycling areas. The station will be open to the public at a later date.

January 2nd was the first day of the new rate increase, and the first day of the no latex paint policy at Factoria Transfer Station. Gaisford said that the public is aware of the changes. ITSG member Kathleen Edman said that the City of Auburn had posted educational flyers at paint retailers to inform people of the change. ITSG member Tom Spille said that neither the City of Bellevue nor Allied Waste received any complaints about the rate increase.

Division staffmember Jane Gateley reported that the King County Council had approved the 'Solid Waste Transfer and Waste Export System Plan', with an amendment to change the title to 'Solid Waste Transfer and Waste Management Plan.' In order to minimize confusion with the title change, the division has provided labels for ITSG to adhere to their current copy of the plan. Extra labels are available to those who need them.

Spille asked if the approved plan would impact the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan (Comp Plan) process. Severn said that the Solid Waste Transfer and Management Plan would be incorporated into the Comp Plan.

III. Waste Prevention & Recycling (WPR): Waste Stream Recap and Product Stewardship Handout:

Gaisford said that a written summary of the previously discussed presentations was provided to ITSG as a companion piece to discuss the Goal Development presentation. This summary is a recap of past presentations and discussions.

Van Orsow commented that the summary does not have any graphics or much in the way of numerical statistics. Gaisford said that there was some discussion on whether to include more numbers and show the pie charts again. Severn stated that the data had been presented several times already. In the beginning of the process, it was decided to break up the different aspects into smaller more manageable chunks. The end product will be recommendations, but before we get there we have to discuss criterion, then goals, and finally recommendations.

Gaisford said that at the end of each presentation there was some discussion on particular waste streams that might need attention. One example is food scraps. In the product stewardship section of the handout there is a list of materials that should be focused on first. Previous discussions stated that there are some products that are a better choice for product stewardship efforts than others. For example, with the opposition to bottle bills in Washington State, it makes sense to start with another product.

Gaisford said that if anyone had any further comments or questions to please contact him.

ITSG inquired about the status of the Governance Report at the Regional Policy Committee (RPC). Severn said that council has not taken action on the report. Governance issues are on the MSWMAC agenda for January.

Van Orsow said that ordinance 14971 established a window when informal discussion can occur without binding agreements being made. He said that this was established in Section 3, and these informal discussions should continue. Van Orsow volunteered to contact council staff before the January MSWMAC meeting since he will be giving the update. MSWMAC will discuss ITSG's work plan in their January meeting.

IV. WPR: Goal Development Part 1: Presentation/Discussion

Gaisford presented data on WPR: Goal Development Part I. This can be viewed at: <http://www.metrokc.gov/extranet/dnrp/swd/Goals1ITSG01032008.ppt>

In response to the 'Current Goals and Secondary Level Measurement Targets' information, ITSG discussed the current recycling rate and how those numbers are calculated. The percentages are derived from information gathered from the haulers and from the Department of Ecology (Ecology). Van Orsow asked if tonnage from recycling events is included in that percentage. Gaisford said it is included in the Ecology numbers, but is not tracked separately, and that tonnage is very small in comparison to the rest of the numbers. Gaisford said that these figures include all municipal solid waste (MSW).

Van Orsow asked how the tonnage from a facility like Nucor Steel is calculated, since it is located in the City of Seattle, but processes materials from all over King County. Gaisford said that Ecology collects the data and they figure out how to subtract Seattle's tonnage from the rest of King County. Division staffmember Bill Reed said that the most reliable data is the single family and multi-family figures. Reed said that these figures are 2006 estimated numbers based on Ecology data from 2005; the new Ecology numbers for 2006 should arrive shortly and they will be very similar. Gaisford said that in the last three years the data from Ecology has improved.

ITSG discussed different municipal recycling goals and how they achieve their recycling rates. Spille stated that California has major tools, in the form of penalties and legislation, that Washington does not. Gaisford said that recycling rates vary depending on what is included in the calculations. Severn said to be careful when comparing rates because there is more behind the numbers.

ITSG member Sharon Hlavka said that she is curious to see what is not being counted with municipalities. Gaisford said that those that do not have high goals have lower rates. The information on rates in the presentation is from the leaders of the solid waste management industry. Spille said that some municipalities have customer resistance and market problems.

Van Orsow suggested a separate slide illustrating the state goals from their comprehensive plan. Edman asked if it's not required to use the state's goals in our plan then what is its purpose. Gaisford said that the state's goals provide guidance for state priorities in grants and funding. The state's plan has a wider scope than the Comp Plan, for example another county might have agriculture waste. Edman said that it is important to show how King County fits under the umbrella of the state plan.

Spille asked if there is anything that is being done operationally which is in conflict or contradicts the state's plan. Gaisford replied not currently. Hlavka said that Ecology has to approve the Comp Plan. She asked how much input do they have during the developmental process. Severn said that the division has monthly meetings where Ecology is present and provided with updates on the process.

Spille commented that he thought King County has the best Comp Plan not only statewide, but nationally as well. Unless there was something radical included in the plan, Ecology would approve it.

ITSG discussed the role of Ecology in the Comp Plan process and whether they should be included in MSWMAC meetings. Severn said that Ecology generally focuses on the Cedar Hills Landfill and those concerns are more operational.

Division staffmember Josh Marx commented that zero waste is not actually zero garbage but zero waste of resources. Spille said that he is behind the concept of zero waste but the name is misleading, and suggested calling it something else. Spille also suggested that he would like to see goals set for individual materials.

Van Orsow asked what the rationale was for not including a recycling rate in the current Comp Plan, when there was a recycling rate goal in the one prior. Gaisford said that there were two reasons. The waste reduction and recycling goals were combined in the previous Comp Plan as one goal. The recycling part of the goal was based on data that was not always complete and the waste reduction part of the goal was an estimate, and there were some that were uncomfortable with that. The second reason was that the ultimate goal was to reduce the amount of waste disposed not recycled. Van Orsow said that the reasons why we do not have a current recycling goal need to be emphasized. Gaisford said that there were reasons to not have the rate, however, there are always numerous questions on how King County compares to other municipalities who have a recycling goal.

Van Orsow asked about the 35 percent multi-family recycling goal that is in the current Comp Plan. Gaisford said that it is not a goal but a target for multi-family recycling; the plan does not provide a numerical or overall goal.

Van Orsow suggested that as part of zero waste of resources that beneficial waste be included. Gaisford said that zero waste all depends on what is focused on, and what is counted.

ITSG discussed how to measure materials that are being diverted or waste reduction efforts. Gaisford used the example of how much waste is being reduced when consumers buy a mulch mower instead of a regular one. Gaisford said that you can do an estimate of how much education is reaching consumers, but it is an estimate and it would be hard to measure quantifiably.

Severn said that part of the current guiding principles in the Comp Plan have to do with the economy, but part of waste reduction is asking consumers to buy less in order to produce less waste. Gaisford said that the economy became part of the goal, because it was thought that if people recycle more there would be more local jobs created.

ITSG member Stacy Breskin-Auer suggested that the graph of King County Disposal, Recycling and Generation from 1977-2006 also include information on population trends. Breskin-Auer said this would show if the recycling rate was increasing due to the recycling programs' efforts or because of population growth. There will always be an increase in waste generation if there is an increase in population.

Van Orsow said that the topic of an energy production goal should be addressed and the potential conflict with having that as a goal. Severn said that there is an internal division goal of capturing 100 percent of the landfill gas and converting that to energy. Gaisford said that there is an issue with using energy production as a goal, because with that as a goal you could say "put all of the waste in the landfill to generate as much energy as possible." Gaisford said that Spokane has a 45 percent recycling rate and they are reporting the amount of energy produced by from their incinerator.

Van Orsow commented that on the 'other categories' that are being tracked but not managed by the County, if any recommendations are made they need to be open ones. Gaisford said that it is important that it is managed by someone, otherwise by default it

will come back to the County. Since this is the case, maybe there should be a goal to make sure it stays in the private sector.

Next Step:

The next MSWMAC meeting will be held January 11th 2008.

The next ITSG meeting is scheduled for January 23rd 2008.